

24 January 1963

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Statements of Senators Keating and Morse re Military Buildup in Cuba

1. Senator Keating is quoted in the press as stating that a new intensive military buildup is under way in Cuba, that Soviet military equipment has been pouring into Cuba, and "they now are ten times stronger than they were on July 1 last year." Senator Morse, referring to press reports that large Soviet shipments of weapons are continuing to arrive in Cuba, ordered an immediate Senate inquiry into the reports.

2. The references to a big new military buildup are not accurate. The intensive phase of the Soviet military buildup in Cuba began in late July 1962. Between then and the imposition of the US quarantine on 24 October 1962 large quantities of Soviet weapons were introduced into Cuba, including the strategic missiles and the IL-28 jet bombers. During this time an estimated 22,000 Soviet military personnel arrived in Cuba. Prior to this there had been only some 600 Soviet and satellite military personnel in Cuba, most of them technicians and trainers.

3. Since late October, the strategic missiles, the IL-28 bombers, and some 8,000 Soviet military personnel have left Cuba. Still remaining on the island is much of the equipment introduced since late July, including 24 SAM sites, equipment for at least four coastal-defense cruise-missile sites, twelve missile-equipped patrol boats, 42 UIG-21Cs, and large quantities of other weapons. Much of this remains under Soviet control. In addition, there are four Soviet armored combat groups still based in Cuba. Only a small portion of the equipment for these Soviet units is believed to have been shipped back to the USSR. It is estimated that roughly 17,000 Soviet military personnel of all types remain in Cuba. There have been indications in intercepted conversations between Soviet units

in Cuba that some of these personnel expect to leave for home this month; but the numbers involved are not known, and there have also been references in these conversations to plans for other Soviet personnel to remain in Cuba.

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beyond a reasonable doubt that there has been only one ship-load of military equipment to Cuba since that date. This shipment, unloaded in Havana from the Soviet vessel Simferopol between 17 and 19 January, probably was military, but its exact nature cannot be determined from information now available. The possibility that relatively small military shipments arrived on other Soviet vessels loaded mainly with civil cargoes cannot be excluded.

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